éirígí
Monthly downloadable éirígí newsletter September 07
www.eirigi.org

Remembering Thomas Ashe

éirígí is to mark the ninetieth anniversary of the death of Thomas Ashe with a commemoration in Dubin's Glasnevin cemetery.
Ashe, a leading revolutionary republican at the time of his death, died on hunger-strike in Sept 1917.

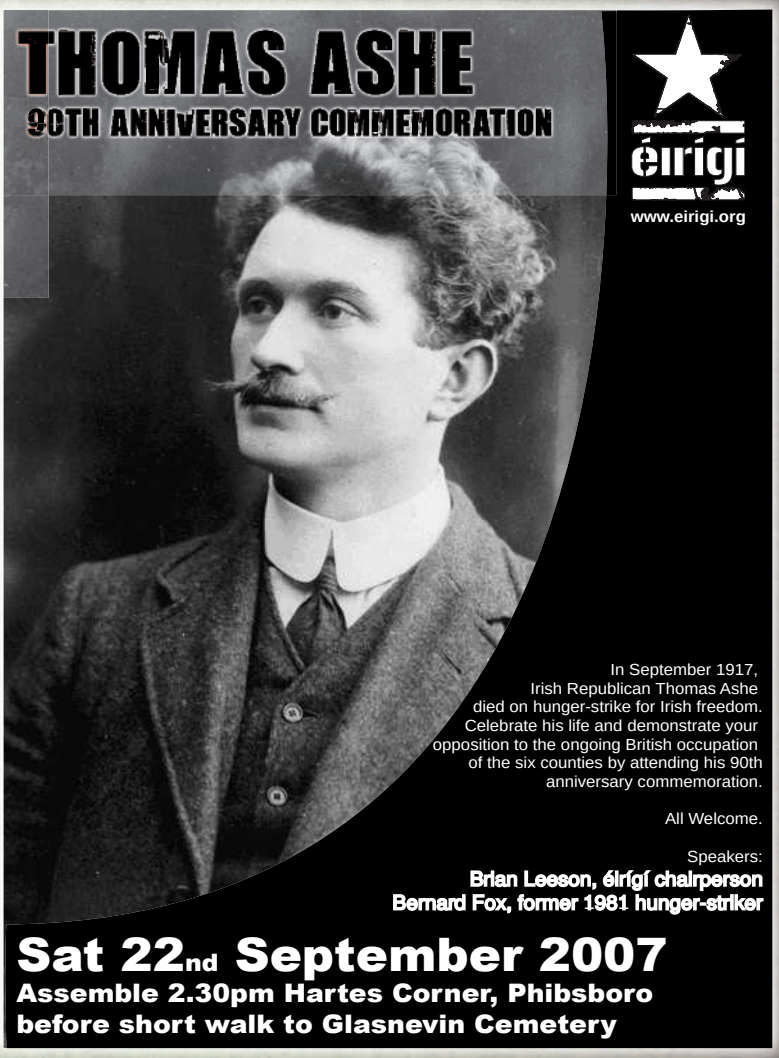
Both Bernard Fox, himself a former 1981 hunger-striker and Brian Leeson, chairperson of éirígí, are to speak at the event.

Speaking in relation to the commemoration éirígí's Stewart Reddin said, 'Thomas Ashe was the first Irish Republican to die on hunger-strike.
His death on the 25th of September 1917, less then eighteen months after the 1916 Rising, was a very significant event in Irish history. His funeral, which was attended by tens of thousands of mourners and Irish volunteers, was a very public demonstration of support for the revolutionary forces of the day.'

Stewart continued, outlining some of the background to Ashe's death, 'At the time of his death Ashe was the President of the supreme council of the IRB and a leading member of the Gaelic league. During the 1916 Rising he had commanded the Volunteers in the Fingal area. Having been released in the general amnesty of 1917 it wasn't long before he was again incarcerated, this time under the Defence of the Realm Act. It was during this imprisonment that he went on hunger-strike for political status.'

In conclusion Stewart noted the symbolic importance of Bernard Fox speaking at the commemoration, 'It is entirely fitting that Bernard Fox, himself a veteran of the 1981 hunger strike, will be speaking on the day. That hunger-strike too was for political status. Although separated by more then sixty years both generations of republicans understood how important it was to refuse to allow Britain to criminalise the struggle for Irish freedom. The same is true today, ninety years after Ashe's death and twenty-six years after the 1981 hunger strike.'

éirígí's Thomas Ashe commemoration will take place on the 25th of September, assembling at 2.30pm at Hartes corner before the short walk to Glasnevin cemetery.


THOMAS ASHE
90TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION
éirígí
www.eirigi.org
In September 1917, Irish Republican Thomas Ashe died on hunger-strike for Irish freedom. Celebrate his life and demonstrate your opposition to the ongoing British occupation of the six counties by attending his 90th anniversary commemoration.
All Welcome.
Speakers:
Brian Leeson, éirígí chairperson
Bernard Fox, former 1981 hunger-striker
Sat 22nd September 2007
Assemble 2.30pm Hartes Corner, Phibsboro
before short walk to Glasnevin Cemetery

'It is entirely fitting that Bernard Fox, himself a veteran of the 1981 hunger strike, will be speaking on the day.'

clár ábhair

Thomas Ashe Republican, Revolutionary

Campaign updates

éirígí campaigns update

No welcome for the English Queen

• éirígí activists protesting in Clondalkin, Dublin

éirígí activists received a warm response from motorists and pedestrians alike as they publicly protested against any state visit to the twenty-six counties by the English queen.
The protest took place on August 22nd at Newlands Cross in west Dublin.
The possibility of a state-visit by Elizabeth Windsor, who is the head of British occupying army, has been the subject of much recent 'kite-flying', most notably by Mary McAleese who said that the circumstances for such a visit "are probably now getting to the point where they are as close to right as they have ever been".
Further protests will follow over the coming weeks and months.

Natural Resources - Mobilise to Bellenaboy

éirígí activists from across the country will travel to Erris, Co Mayo on Friday, September 14th to join a major 'sit-down' protest at the gates of the site of Shell's proposed gas refinery.

'Any profit accrued from the project will go straight into the bank accounts of Shell...'

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Campaign for British withdrawal

The first element of éirígí's campaign for a British withdrawal reached County Derry during the final week of August. Thousands of copies of a new information leaflet highlighting the ongoing nature of the British occupation were delivered to homes across the county.

éirígí's mid-Ulster spokesperson Geraldine Dougan expressed encouragement at the response they had received. "The leaflet has been well received in the areas we have covered to date. I have no doubt that the campaign will continue to be well received in this area and indeed throughout the country.

Thomas Ashe 1885 -1917

'If I die, I die in a good cause', the haunting words of Thomas Ashe, spoken just prior to his death on hunger strike in 1917.

He packed much into his short life; school principal, active member of the Gaelic League, Commandant of the 5th Battalion of the Irish Volunteers in 1916, trade unionist, life sentence prisoner, President of the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and ultimately the first IRA Volunteer to die on hunger-strike in pursuit of political status.

Born in 1885 in the village of Lispole, near Dingle, Co. Kerry, Thomas Ashe pursued a career in teaching, completing his training at the De La Salle College in Waterford. He subsequently took up a position as Principal at Corduff National School in Lusk Co. Dublin and divided his free time between commitments to the Gaelic League and the Irish Volunteers.

He was a popular teacher and was extremely active in the local community of north county Dublin, establishing the local Black Ravens Pipe Band as well as organising hurling matches and feiseanna.

A member of the Dublin Branch of the Irish National Teachers Organisation, he was a determined supporter of the Dublin workers during the 1913 Lockout, commenting in a letter to his brother Gregory in America, '...we are all here on Larkin's side. He'll beat hell out of the snobbish, mean, seoinín employers yet, and more power to him.'

Deeply committed to his work in the Gaelic League, he travelled to the United States in 1914 to raise funds on their behalf.

He played a crucial role in the 1916 Rising. As Commandant of the 5th Battalion of the Irish Volunteers during Easter week he led some of the most daring attacks outside the city. The Volunteers captured RIC barracks in Swords, Garristown and Ashbourne, adopting guerrilla tactics that were later to prove so effective during the Tan War.

Following the Rising, Ashe was sentenced to death which was later commuted to penal servitude for life. He was imprisoned at Dartmoor and Lewes in England, before being released as part of the general amnesty in 1917.

Prior to leaving Lewes Gaol, he was elected President of the Supreme Council of the IRB.

Upon release he quickly immersed himself once again in republican activism, travelling the country speaking at numerous Sinn Féin rallies and addressing the first annual Roger Casement commemoration in his native Kerry.

He was arrested at one such meeting in Co. Longford and sentenced to a years hard labour for making a 'seditious speech.'

• Thomas Ashe

Denied political status, the prisoners in Mountjoy commenced a hunger-strike in September 1917. Ashe suffered the torture of force feeding and it was during one such brutal session that his lungs became congested and he died on 25th September in the Mater Hospital, aged just 32.

His death brought a massive outpouring of grief as thousands filed passed his coffin as it lay in state in Dublin City Hall. His funeral was one of the biggest seen in the city for generations as tens of thousands came to pay their respects to the gallant Fenian.

A firing party of Volunteers fired a volley of shots over Ashe's grave. It was this thatMichael Collins referred to in his short and pointed oration that followed,

"The volley we have just heard is the only speech it is proper to make above the grave of a dead Fenian."

He packed much into his short life, school principal, active member of the Gaelic League, Commandant of the 5th Battalion of the Irish Volunteers in 1916, trade unionist, life sentence prisoner, President of the Supreme Council of the IRB, and ultimately .... to die on hunger-strike in pursuit of political status.

Natural Resources - Mobilise to Bellenaboy

....from page 2

If the refinery is allowed to be completed it will be fed by an experimental high-pressure gas pipeline, the route of which will pass dangerously close to many homes in this remote gaelteacht community.

This unacceptable risk to human life is only one element of a Corrib gas debacle which will has seen Shell and its partners take control of Ireland's only major proven gas reserve - and this at a time of developing global energy crises.

The current proposed refinery, however, is only the tip of the iceberg for Erris.

The Petroleum Affairs Division of the Dublin governments Department for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources has recently admitted that all 450 acres of land at Shell's Bellenaboy site could eventually be used to facilitate a massive refinery which will be used to process, not only Corrib gas, but also gas from other fields along the Atlantic margin.

éirígí chairperson Brian Leeson stressed the importance of large numbers of people attending the demonstration on September 14.

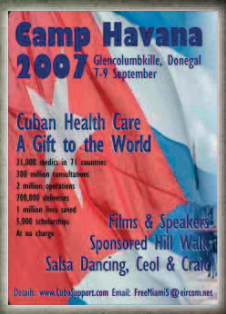
"Irelands only major proven gas reserve has been given away to Shell and Statoil. The end result of that deal will see us, the people of Ireland, paying the same for gas from Corrib as we do for gas from Siberia. The potential loss to the future prosperity of this country is incalculable. If you are angered by this travesty then make an effort to get to Mayo and show solidarity with a besieged community."

Anybody wishing to travel to Bellinaboy on Friday, September 14 can contact dublins2s@gmail.com or their local Shell to Sea group. The protest is scheduled to begin at 7am.

• éirígí activists protesting at Bellenaboy

UPCOMING EVENTS

Camp Havana



Camp Havana is now firmly established as the premier Cuba solidarity event on the Irish calendar.

This year's Camp Havana is dedicated to the topic of Cuban Health Care in the world and takes place between 7-9 September, in Glencolumbcille, Co Donegal. For more information visit www.CubaSupport.com

Shell to Sea
Sit Down Blockade: Bellanaboy

Shell to Sea have called a national mobilisation for a mass sitdown protest at the refinery at Bellanaboy on the morning of Friday 14 September. Buses will be travelling from Dublin, Belfast and Cork. For more information visit www.corribsos.com

éirígí Thomas Ashe Commemoration

The ninetieth anniversary of the death from hunger strike of Thomas Ashe occurs in September and éirígí are planning to mark it with a commemorative event. Bernard Fox, the former 1981 hunger-striker, will be guest speaker at the commemoration.

Assembling at 2.30pm at Hartes corner before the short walk to Glasnevin cemetery.

Yes, I would like to to join/help éirígí.

Name/Ainm.....

Address/Seoladh.....

.....

Telephone/Fón.....

E-mail/R-Phost.....

Age/Aois.....

Please return to éirígí PO Box 10769, Dublin 6